

TITLE 76. LAND RESOURCES AND USE

CHAPTER 2. PLANNING AND ZONING

Part 9. Agricultural Activities

76-2-901. Agricultural activities -- legislative finding and purpose.

76-2-902. Definitions.

76-2-903. Local ordinances.

76-2-901. Agricultural activities -- legislative finding and purpose. (1) The legislature finds that agricultural lands and the ability and right of farmers and ranchers to produce a safe, abundant, and secure food and fiber supply have been the basis of economic growth and development of all sectors of Montana's economy. In order to sustain Montana's valuable farm economy and land bases associated with it, farmers and ranchers must be encouraged and have the right to stay in farming.

(2) It is therefore the intent of the legislature to protect agricultural activities from governmental zoning and nuisance ordinances.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 309, L. 1995.

76-2-902. Definitions. As used in this part, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Agricultural activity" means a condition or activity that provides an annual gross income of not less than \$1,500 or that occurs on land classified as agricultural or forest land for taxation purposes. The condition or activity must occur in connection with the commercial production of farm products and includes but is not limited to:

- (a) produce marketed at roadside stands or farm markets;
- (b) noise;
- (c) odors;
- (d) dust;
- (e) fumes;
- (f) operation of machinery and irrigation pumps;
- (g) movement of water for agricultural activities, including but not limited to use of existing county road ditches, streams, rivers, canals, and drains, and use of water for agricultural activities;
- (h) ground and aerial application of seed, fertilizers, conditioners, and plant protection products;
- (i) employment and use of labor;
- (j) roadway movement of equipment and livestock;
- (k) protection from damage from wildlife;
- (l) prevention of trespass;
- (m) construction and maintenance of buildings, fences, roads, bridges, ponds, drains, waterways, and similar features and maintenance of streambanks and watercourses;
- (n) conversion from one agricultural activity to another, provided that the conversion does not adversely impact adjacent property owners;
- (o) timber harvesting, thinning, and timber regeneration;
- (p) burning and stubble and slash disposal; and

(q) plant nursery and commercial greenhouse activities.

(2) "Commercial production of farm products" means the growing, raising, or marketing of plants or animals by the owner, owner's agent, or lessee of land that provides an annual gross income of not less than \$1,500 or that occurs on land that is classified as agricultural or forest land for taxation purposes. The term includes but is not limited to:

- (a) forages and sod crops;
- (b) dairy and dairy products;
- (c) poultry and poultry products;
- (d) livestock, including breeding, feeding, and grazing of livestock and recreational equine use;
- (e) fruits;
- (f) vegetables;
- (g) flowers;
- (h) seeds;
- (i) grasses;
- (j) trees, including commercial timber;
- (k) fresh water fish and fish products;
- (l) apiaries;
- (m) equine and other similar products; or
- (n) any other product that incorporates the use of food, feed, fiber, or fur.

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 309, L. 1995.

76-2-903. Local ordinances. A city, county, taxing district, or other political subdivision of this state may not adopt an ordinance or resolution that prohibits any existing agricultural activities or forces the termination of any existing agricultural activities outside the boundaries of an incorporated city or town. Zoning and nuisance ordinances may not prohibit agricultural activities that were established outside the corporate limits of a municipality and then incorporated into that municipality by annexation.

History: En. Sec. 3, Ch. 309, L. 1995.

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CHAPTER 15. REGULATION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

Titles 75; Title 76, chapter 4; Title 82 Montana Code Annotated

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